

State of Connecticut

African-American Affairs Commission
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue – Room 509
Hartford, CT 06106
860-240-8555

March 1, 2016

Good Afternoon Members of the Housing Committee, my name is Glenn A. Cassis, Executive Director of the African-American Affairs Commission (AAAC). I am submitting this testimony in support of **Raised Bill 155, An Act Concerning the Allocation of Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)**. The AAAC's mission is to improve and promote the economic development, education, health and political well-being of the African-American community in the State of Connecticut. I applaud the Housing Committee for being proactive by addressing this complex issue.

Connecticut has the unenviable distinction of being one of the most segregated states in the country - racially, ethnically, educationally and socio-economically. The principle factor that contributes to this is the housing pattern throughout the state. Since the turn of the 20th Century, public policy has been an enormous factor keeping Connecticut "separate and unequal". Policies that kept financing for home ownership out of reach for African-Americans, red-lining and other "not in my neighborhood" policies have contributed directly to racial isolation throughout Connecticut. This has contributed significantly to many of the educational, health, economic and employment disparities.

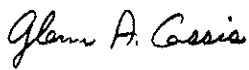
There is much that must be done to correct this inequity. Making it easier to secure affordable housing through the thoughtful administration of low income housing tax credits is one very important step in the right direction. Through the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority a plan for allocating low income housing tax credits can and should be designed. Such a plan will create tiers

Our Mission

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that will maximize credits so they can be allocated with the applicant's best interests. Raised Bill 155 will allow the Authority to be flexible and take advantage of the resources available. As stated earlier, this is one step to help reduce the disparities facing Connecticut. The African-American Affairs Commission believes that we must take advantage of the limited resources available to assist in improving the quality of life in Connecticut. This is one piece of the puzzle that we have the will to address and we should take positive action. Thank you for accepting my testimony in support of Raised Bill 155.

Submitted by,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Glenn A. Cassis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Glenn A. Cassis
Executive Director, AAAC